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December 21, 2001

BOX PCT

Commissioner for Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

Express Mail No. EF279045899US
PCT/EP00/05800
-filed June 23, 2000

Re: Application of Hans-Peter FEUERBAUM, Dieter WINKLER, and Dror KELLA
CHARGED PARTICLE DEVICE
Assignee: ICT, Integrated Circuit Testing Gesellschaft für
Halbleiterprüftechnik mbh
Our Ref: CQ10070

Dear Sir:

The following documents and fees are submitted herewith in connection with the above application for the purpose of entering the National stage under 35 U.S.C. § 371 and in accordance with Chapter II of the Patent Cooperation Treaty:

- ☐ an executed Declaration and Power of Attorney.
- ☐ an English translation of the International Application.
- ☐ 6 sheet(s) of drawings.
- ☐ an English translation of Article 19 claim amendments.
- ☐ an English translation of Article 34 amendments (annexes to the IPER).
- ☐ an executed Assignment and PTO 1595 form.
- ☐ a Form PTO-1449 listing the ISR references, and a complete copy of each reference.
- ☒ a Preliminary Amendment

The Declaration and Power of Attorney, Assignment, Form PTO-1449 listing the International Search Report (ISR) references and a complete copy of each reference will be submitted at a later date.

It is assumed that copies of the International Application, the International Search Report, the International Preliminary Examination Report, and any Articles 19 and 34 amendments as required by § 371(c) will be supplied directly by the International Bureau, but if further copies are needed, the undersigned can easily provide them upon request.



Sughrue

SUGHRUE MION, PLLC

Commissioner for Patents

Page 2

10031001/0316001
531 Rec'd PCT/F **21 DEC 2001**

The Government filing fee is calculated, **after entry of the Preliminary Amendment**, as follows:


Total claims	<u>25</u> - 20 =	<u>5</u> x \$18.00 =	<u>\$90.00</u>
Independent claims	<u>4</u> - 3 =	<u>1</u> x \$84.00 =	<u>\$84.00</u>
Base Fee			\$890.00
TOTAL FEE			<u>\$1064.00</u>

Please charge the statutory filing fee of \$1064.00 to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. You are also directed and authorized to charge or credit any difference or overpayment to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16, 1.17 and 1.492 which may be required during the entire pendency of the application to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. A duplicate copy of this transmittal letter is attached.

Priority is claimed from:

<u>Country</u>	<u>Application No</u>	<u>Filing Date</u>
Europe	EP 99112116.1-2208	June 23, 1999
PCT	PCT/EP00/05800	June 23, 2000

Respectfully submitted,


 Frank L. Bernstein
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Date: December 21, 2001

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531 Rec'd PCT/PTC 21 DEC 2001

PATENT APPLICATION

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re application of

Express Mail No. EF279045899US

Hans-Peter FEUERBAUM, et al.

Filed: Concurrently herewith

For: CHARGED PARTICLE DEVICE

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Commissioner for Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

Sir:

Prior to examination, please amend the above-identified application as follows:

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Amend the specification by inserting before the first line the sentence:

This is a National stage entry under 35 U.S.C. § 371 of PCT Application No. PCT/EP00/05800 filed June 23, 2000; the above noted prior application is hereby incorporated by reference; the international application to which benefit is claimed was published under PCT Article 21(2) in English.

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please enter the following amended claims:

3. (Amended) The charged particle device (1) according to claim 1 wherein the drift region (26) reaching from the back surface (28) to the front surface (27) is positioned away from the geometrical center (40) of the mirror.

4. (Amended) The charged particle device (1) according to claim 1 further comprising a deflection unit (12C) for directing the charged particle beam essentially along the optical axis of

PATENT APPLICATION**PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT**

the objective lens, said deflection unit (12C) being arranged between the particle mirror (14) and the objective lens (10).

6. (Amended) The charged particle device (1) according to claim 1 wherein the particle mirror (14) is tilted with regard to the optical axis (6) by an angle α between about 20 and about 70 degrees, preferably between about 40 and about 50 degrees, most preferably about 45 degrees.

7. (Amended) The charged particle device (1) according to claim 1 wherein the particle mirror (14) comprises a conductive surface (21) or a conductive deflecting grid (41) kept on a predetermined potential sufficient to deflect all particles having less than a predetermined energy.

9. (Amended) The charged particle device (1) according to claim 7 wherein the particle mirror (14) comprises a particle absorber (23) for absorbing particles having more than the predetermined energy.

10. (Amended) The charged particle device (1) according to claim 7 wherein a second detector (24) is arranged behind the conductive deflecting grid (41) for detecting particles having more than the predetermined energy.

11. (Amended) The charged particle device (1) according to claim 1 wherein a high pass filter (3) is arranged in front of the detector (16), allowing only particles having an energy above a predetermined energy to enter the detector.

13. (Amended) The charged particle device (1) according to claim 1 wherein said drift region (26) is positioned away from the optical axis (6) of the objective lens (10), so that all charged particles coming from the specimen within an angle $\gamma \leq 5$ degrees, preferably ≤ 10

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degrees, as measured from the optical axis (6) of the objective lens (10), hit the deflecting region (25) of the mirror (14).

17. (Amended) The particle mirror (14) according to claim 15 wherein the particle mirror (14) further comprises a particle absorber (23) for absorbing particles having more than the predetermined energy.

18. (Amended) The particle mirror (14) according to claim 14 wherein deflecting region (25) deflects the particles, so that the angle between the outgoing path of the particle and the axes normal to the front surface of the mirror, at the point where the particle hits the mirror, equals the angle between the incoming path of the particle and the axes normal to the front surface of the mirror.

23. (Amended) The charged particle device (1) according to claim 21 wherein the particle mirror (14) comprises a particle absorber (23) for absorbing particles having more than the predetermined energy.

24. (Amended) The charged particle device (1) according to claim 20 wherein the particle mirror (14) comprises a deflecting region (25) located on the front surface (27) for deflecting all particles in a given velocity range and in a given angular range, so that the angle β_0 between the outgoing path of the particle and the axes normal to the front surface of the mirror, at the point where the particle hits the mirror, equals the angle β_1 between the incoming path of the particle and the axes normal to the front surface of the mirror.

25. (Amended) The charged particle device (1) according to claim 20 wherein the particle mirror (14) is tilted with regard to the optical axis (6) by an angle α between about 20 and about

PATENT APPLICATION

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

70 degrees, preferably between about 40 and about 50 degrees, most preferably about 45 degrees.

IN THE ABSTRACT:

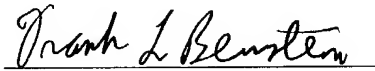
Please add the following Abstract of the Disclosure.

The invention provides a charged particle device (1) comprising: a particle source (2) for providing a charged particle beam (4), and objective lens (10) for directing the particle beam onto a specimen (8), said objective lens (10) having an optical axis (6); a particle mirror (14) located on the optical axis (6) of the objective lens (10), said particle mirror having a front surface, a back surface, a drift region (26) reaching from the back surface to the front surface for letting the charged particle beam pass from the back surface to the front surface, said drift region (26) being positioned away from the optical axis (6), and a deflecting region located on the front surface for deflecting charge particles coming from the specimen towards a detector (16).

PATENT APPLICATION**PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT****REMARKS**

The foregoing amendments have been made to ensure correct dependencies in the claims, and to ensure that the Examiner receives a copy of the Abstract, which was part of the publication of this PCT application. Early, favorable consideration on the merits is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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Date: December 21, 2001

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

APPENDIX

VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

The specification is changed as follows:

IN THE CLAIMS:

The claims are amended as follows:

3. (Amended) The charged particle device (1) according to claim 1 [or 2] wherein the drift region (26) reaching from the back surface (28) to the front surface (27) is positioned away from the geometrical center (40) of the mirror.

4. (Amended) The charged particle device (1) according to [one of the preceding claims] claim 1 further comprising a deflection unit (12C) for directing the charged particle beam essentially along the optical axis of the objective lens, said deflection unit (12C) being arranged between the particle mirror (14) and the objective lens (10).

6. (Amended) The charged particle device (1) according to [one of the preceding] claim 1 wherein the particle mirror (14) is tilted with regard to the optical axis (6) by an [angle] angle α between about 20 and about 70 [degree] degrees, preferably between about 40 and about 50 [degree] degrees, most preferably about 45 [degree] degrees.

7. (Amended) The charged particle device (1) according to [one of the preceding claims] claim 1 wherein the particle mirror (14) comprises a conductive surface (21) or a conductive deflecting grid (41) kept on a predetermined potential sufficient to deflect all particles having less than a predetermined energy.

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9. (Amended) The charged particle device (1) according to claim 7 [or 8] wherein the particle mirror (14) comprises a particle absorber (23) for absorbing particles having more than the predetermined energy.

10. (Amended) The charged particle device (1) according to claim 7 [or 8] wherein a second detector (24) is arranged behind the conductive deflecting grid (41) for detecting particles having more than the predetermined energy.

11. (Amended) The charged particle device (1) according to [one of the preceding claims] claim 1 wherein a high pass filter (3) is arranged in front of the detector (16), allowing only particles having an energy above a predetermined energy to enter the detector.

13. (Amended) The charged particle device (1) according to [one of the preceding claims] claim 1 wherein said drift region (26) is positioned away from the optical axis (6) of the objective lens (10), so that all charged [particle] particles coming from the specimen within an angle $\gamma \leq 5$ [degree] degrees, preferably ≤ 10 [degree] degrees, as measured from the optical axis (6) of the objective lens (10), hit the deflecting region (25) of the mirror (14).

17. (Amended) The particle mirror (14) according to claim 15 [or 16] wherein the particle mirror (14) further comprises a particle absorber (23) for absorbing particles having more than the predetermined energy.

18. (Amended) The particle mirror (14) according to [one of claims 14 to 17] claim 14 wherein deflecting region (25) deflects the particles, so that the angle between the outgoing path of the particle and the axes normal to the front surface of the mirror, at the point where the particle hits the mirror, equals the angle between the incoming path of the particle and the axes normal to the front surface of the mirror.

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23. (Amended) The charged particle device (1) according to claim 21 [or 22] wherein the particle mirror (14) comprises a particle absorber (23) for absorbing particles having more than the predetermined energy.

24. (Amended) The charged particle device (1) according to [one of claims 20 to 23] claim 20 wherein the particle mirror (14) comprises a deflecting region (25) located on the front surface (27) for deflecting all particles in a given velocity range and in a given angular range, so that the angle β_o between the outgoing path of the particle and the axes normal to the front surface of the mirror, at the point where the particle hits the mirror, equals the angle β_i between the incoming path of the particle and the axes normal to the front surface of the mirror.

25. (Amended) The charged particle device (1) according to [one of claims 20 to 24] claim 20 wherein the particle mirror (14) is tilted with regard to the optical axis (6) by an [angel] angle α between about 20 and about 70 [degree] degrees, preferably between about 40 and about 50 [degree] degrees, most preferably about 45 [degree] degrees.

IN THE ABSTRACT OF DISCLOSURE:

The abstract has been added.

CHARGED PARTICLE DEVICE

5

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

The invention relates to a charged particle device. In particular, this invention relates to a device and method for the examination of specimen with
10 a beam of charged particles.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

15 Beams of negatively or positively charged particles can be used for the examination of specimen. Compared to optical light, the resolving power of a beam of charged particles is several magnitudes higher and allows for the examination of much finer details. Accordingly, charged particle beams, especially electron beams, are used in a variety of ways in biology, medicine,
20 the materials sciences, and lithography. Examples include the diagnosis of human, animal, and plant diseases, visualisation of sub cellular components and structures such as DNA, determination of the structure of composite materials, thin films, and ceramics, or the inspection of masks and wafers used in semiconductor technology.

25

The two basic types of charged particle devices for the examination of specimen, that are in widespread use today, are the transmission electron microscope (TEM) and the scanning electron microscope (SEM). In addition to the normal use the two microscopes, both the TEM and SEM have been
30 modified, resulting in instruments designed to perform specific functions. For example, the scanning transmission electron microscope (STEM) produces a transmitted image, as a TEM does, but uses a scanning beam, as the SEM does.

In conventional charged particle devices like, for example, a scanning
35 electron microscopes (SEM) the designer always had to make a compromise

examination of specimen with a beam of charged particles as specified in independent claim 19. According to a still further aspect of the present invention there is provided a charged particle device as specified in independent claim 20. Further advantages, features, aspects and details of the invention are evident from the dependent claims, the description and the accompanying drawings. The claims are intended to be understood as a first non-limiting approach of defining the invention in general terms.

According to the first aspect of the present invention, there is provided a charged particle device comprising: a particle source for providing a charged particle beam; an objective lens for focusing the particle beam onto a specimen, said objective lens having an optical axis; a particle mirror located on the optical axis of the objective lens, said particle mirror having a front surface, a back surface, a drift region reaching from the back surface to the front surface for letting the charged particle beam pass from the back surface to the front surface, said drift region being positioned away from the optical axis, and a deflecting region located on the front surface for deflecting charged particles coming from the specimen towards a detector.

The improved charged particle device has the advantage that the use of a particle mirror results in additional freedom for the design of the charged particle device. A particle mirror, contrary to a particle detector, can be arranged in the device more easily without negatively affecting the focusing/projecting properties of the objective lens. By having the drift region, the particle mirror can be integrated in the device more easily, without negatively affecting charged particle beam. Due to the fact that the drift region is positioned away from the axis of the objective lens, the area, where the axis intersects the mirror, can be used as deflecting region, which increases the quality of the examination considerably, because the particles moving along the axis carry an important part of the information about the specimen.

Furthermore, since there is now no limitation on the size of the detector, all kinds of detectors and spectrometers can be used to analyse the specimen. In addition to that, one type of detector can be easily replaced by another type of detector, in order to adapt the device to specific measurement needs.

According to a preferred embodiment, the particle mirror comprises a deflecting region located on the front surface for deflecting all particles in a given velocity range (energy range) and in a given angular range, so that the
5 angle β_o between the outgoing path of the particle and the axes normal to the front surface of the mirror, at the point where the particle hits the mirror, equals the angle $\alpha\beta_i$ between the incoming path of the particle and the axes normal to the front surface of the mirror. Due to the fact that the energy and the angular distribution of the particles coming from the specimen is preserved by the
10 mirror, the detector is capable of basically recording the same information as if it were directly located near the specimen.

According to a preferred embodiment, the drift region of the particle mirror reaching from the back surface to the front surface is positioned away
15 from the center of the mirror. The particle mirror is preferably arranged in such a manner, that most of the particles coming from the specimen are deflected towards the detector. This implies that the geometric center of the mirror is preferably located where the particles coming from the specimen are concentrated.

20 According to a preferred embodiment, the charged particle device further comprises a deflection unit for directing the charged particle beam essentially along the optical axis of the objective lens, said deflection unit being arranged between the particle mirror and the objective lens. In this
25 arrangement basically all particles coming from the specimen and moving along the optical axis can be deflected to the detector. Obviously, the deflecting unit affects the charged particle beam moving towards the specimen as well as the charged particles coming from the specimen. However, these two types of particles are affected in different manner, which leads to a
30 separation of the two types of particles. This is regardless of the deflection unit being magnetic or electrostatic.

A magnetic deflection unit, in particular, separates charged particle beam moving towards the specimen and the charged particles coming from the
35 specimen into complementary parts. According to Lorentz Law, charged

According to a still further preferred embodiment, the particle mirror comprises a conductive surface or a conductive deflecting grid kept on a predetermined potential sufficient to deflect all particles having less than a predetermined energy. Thereby, the surface of a metal plate can be used as a conductive surface. Furthermore, a ceramic material, for example Al_2O_3 , having a conductive coating can be used for this purpose. In this arrangement the particle mirror acts like a low pass filter and by varying the potential of the conductive surface or the conductive deflecting grid, the mirror can be used for spectroscopic purposes. Furthermore, it is preferred if the particle mirror comprises at least one conductive screening grid for screening potential of the surface or the conductive deflecting grid from the rest of the device and/or a particle absorber for absorbing particles having more than the predetermined energy. In case a metal plate or a ceramic plate having a conductive coating is used, the metallic or ceramic plate can be used as the particle absorber.

According to a still further preferred embodiment, a second detector is arranged behind the conductive deflecting grid for detecting particles having more than the predetermined energy.

According to a still further preferred embodiment, the charged particle device further comprises a high pass filter, which is arranged in front of the detector, allowing only particles having an energy above a predetermined energy to enter the detector. The combination of a low pass filter and a high pass filter allows to pick out any band of energies for the detection and thus enhance material contrast or other features of the specimen. Thereby, it is preferred that the high pass filter comprises a conductive filtering grid kept on a predetermined potential sufficient to filter out all particles having less than a predetermined energy.

According to a still further preferred embodiment, said drift region is positioned away from the optical axis of the objective lens, so that all charged particle coming from the specimen within an angle $\gamma \leq 5$ degree, preferably ≤ 10 degree, as measured from the optical axis of the objective lens, hit the deflecting region of the mirror. This has the advantage that, especially for

specimen with a high topography, most of the charged particles coming from the specimen can be detected.

According to the second aspect of the present invention, there is provided
5 a particle mirror for use in a charged particle device comprising: a front surface and a back surface, a deflecting region located on the front surface for deflecting all particles in a given velocity range and in a given angular range, a drift region reaching from the back surface to the front surface for letting particles pass from the back surface to the front surface of the mirror, the drift
10 region being positioned away from the geometrical center of the mirror.

According to a preferred embodiment, the particle mirror further comprises a conductive surface or the conductive deflecting grid kept on a predetermined potential sufficient to deflect all particles having less than a
15 predetermined energy. Furthermore, it is preferred if the particle mirror comprises a conductive screening grid for screening potential of the surface or the conductive deflecting grid from the rest of the device and/or a particle absorber for absorbing particles having more than the predetermined energy.

According to the third aspect of the present invention, there is provided a
20 charged particle device comprising: a particle source for providing a charged particle beam; an objective lens for focusing the particle beam onto a specimen; a particle mirror for deflecting charged particles coming from the specimen towards a detector; and a high pass filter being arranged in front of the detector,
25 allowing only particles having an energy above a predetermined energy to enter the detector.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

30

Some of the above indicated and other more detailed aspects of the invention will be described in the following description and partially illustrated with reference to the figures. Therein:

Fig. 1 is a schematic vertical cross section of a charged particle device according to a first embodiment of the present invention.

Fig. 2 is a enlarged view of the particle mirror as used in Fig. 1.

5

Fig. 3 is a schematic vertical cross section of a charged particle device according to a second embodiment of the present invention.

Fig. 4 is a enlarged view of the particle mirror as used in Fig. 3.

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Fig. 5 is a schematic vertical cross section of a charged particle device according to a third embodiment of the present invention.

Fig. 6 is a schematic vertical cross section of a charged particle device according to a fourth embodiment of the present invention.

15

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

20 A first embodiment according to the invention is shown schematically in Fig. 1. A charged particle beam 4, normally an electron beam, comes from charged particle source 2 e.g. a tungsten-hairpin gun, a lanthanum-hexaboride gun, a field-emission gun, or a thermionic Schottkey emitter. At least one anode 3 is arranged below the particle source 2, which attracts and accelerates the charged particles. In order to accelerate the charged particles, the charged particle source 2 is kept on negative potential, for example -0.5 kV, whereas the anode 3 is kept on a positive potential, for example +10 kV.

25

The anode 3 is followed by a condenser lens 5, which concentrates the charged particles into a fine beam and guides the beam along the optical axis 6, which is also the axis of the objective lens 10. The first stage 12A of the three step deflection unit 12 deflects the beam 4 of charged particles away from the optical axis 6. The beam 4 of charged particles then enters the second stage 12B of the three step deflection unit, which redirects the beam 4 of charged particles towards the optical axis 6. On its way back to the optical axis 6, the

35

beam 4 passes the particle mirror 14, that is located on the optical axis 6. The charged particle beam 4 passes the particle mirror 14 through a drift region 26 (drift tube) arranged within the particle mirror 14.. The drift region 26 reaches from the back surface 28 of the mirror to the front surface 27 of the mirror (see Fig. 2). Due to drift region 26 arranged in the particle mirror 14, the charged particle beam 4 passes the particle mirror 14 in a basically undisturbed manner. Accordingly, there is no need for any additional measures for correcting the charged particle beam.

10 The beam 4 of charged particles then enters the third stage 12C of the three step deflection unit 12, which redirects the beam 4 of charged particles essentially in the direction the optical axis 6. The deflection unit 12 may comprise electrostatic or magnetic deflection stages 12A – 12C.

15 The third stage 12C of the three step deflection unit 12 is followed by the objective lens 10 for focusing the particle beam 4 onto a specimen 8. In order to decelerate the charged particles, the specimen 8 is grounded, so that the charged particles, normally electrons, hit the specimen 8 with an energy of 0.5 keV in this example.

20 When the charged particles strike the surface of the specimen 8, they undergo a series complex interactions with the nuclei and electrons of the atoms of the specimen. The interactions between the incident charged particles and the atoms of the specimen may be elastic or inelastic. The interactions produce a variety of secondary products, such as electrons of different energy, X rays, light, and heat, as well as charged particles scattered backward. Many of these secondary products and/or the backscattered charged particles are used to produce the image of the specimen and to collect additional data from the specimen.

30 A secondary product of major importance to examination or the image formation of specimens are secondary electrons that escape from the specimen at a variety of angles with relatively low energy (3 to 50 eV). Due to the high positive potential inside the objective lens 10 (in this example +10 kV), the secondary electrons are drawn into the objective lens 10 and are accelerated

35

towards the particle mirror 14. The secondary electrons pass the third stage 12C of the three step deflection unit 12 and move on to the particle mirror 14. By passing the third stage 12C of the three step deflection unit 12, the secondary electrons are also deflected. In the example shown in Fig. 1 the third stage 12C of the three step deflection unit 12 is a magnetic deflection unit. Therefore, the secondary electrons are deflected in the opposite direction with regard to the primary electron beam 4. Accordingly, the primary electron beam and the secondary electrons are separated without negatively affecting the primary electron beam 4.

10

The secondary electrons hit the deflecting region 25 of the particle mirror 14 and are deflected toward the detector 16. In the embodiment of the present invention shown in Fig. 1, the particle mirror 14 comprises a conductive surface 21, which is tilted with regard to the optical axis 6 by an angle α of about 45 degree. Furthermore, the conductive surface 21 is kept on a predetermined potential sufficient to deflect all particles having less than a predetermined energy. In this example, the conductive surface 21 is kept on a potential of slightly below +5 kV, in order to deflect all secondary electrons coming from the specimen 8 towards the detector 16. Thereby, the secondary electrons are deflected in a manner, so that the angle β_o between the outgoing path of the particle and the axes normal to the front surface of the mirror equals the angle β_i between the incoming path of the particle and the axes normal to the front surface of the mirror (see Fig. 2).

In this example, the particle mirror is made of Al_2O_3 having a conductive coating on the front and on the back surface thereof, whereby the conductive coating on the front surface is isolated from the conductive coating on the back surface. Furthermore, the particle mirror 14 comprises a metal tube located in the mirror, which forms the drift region 26. The metal tube is connected with the back surface of the mirror and is kept on the same potential as the back surface of the mirror. Care has to be taken at the periphery of mirror and between the drift region 26 and the deflecting region 25, in order to avoid any shorts between the front and the back surface of the mirror.

The detector 16 may be chosen from a variety of detector types. In the present example, the detector 16 is a scintillator that is connected to a photo multiplier via a light guide. The output of the detector 16 is then used, for example, to display or to record an image of the surface of the specimen.

5

Backscattered particles, normally electrons, are also of importance to the image formation of specimens. Backscattered electrons are high in energy, with an average of 60% to 80% of the initial energy of the electron beam (0.5 keV in this example). Due to the high positive potential inside the objective lens 10 (in this example +10 kV), the backscattered electrons are also drawn into the objective lens 10 and are accelerated towards the particle mirror 14. The backscattered electrons pass the third stage 12C of the three step deflection unit 12 and move on to the particle mirror 14. By passing the third stage 12C of the three step deflection unit 12, the backscattered electrons are also deflected. As explained above, the third stage 12C of the three step deflection unit 12 is a magnetic deflection unit. Therefore, the backscattered electrons are also deflected in the opposite direction with regard to the primary electron beam 4. Accordingly, the primary electron beam and the backscattered electrons are separated without negatively affecting the primary electron beam 4.

20

Accordingly, the backscattered electrons also hit the deflecting region 25 of the particle mirror 14. However, due to their relatively high energy compared to the secondary electrons, the potential of the conductive surface 21 is not sufficient to deflect the backscattered electrons. Accordingly, the backscattered electrons pass through the conductive surface 21 and reach the ceramic material Al_2O_3 which acts as a particle absorber 23.

25

In order to separate the secondary electrons from the backscattered electrons, in the general case the potential of the conductive surface 21 is to be chosen slightly below $BE \sin^2 \alpha$, whereby BE is the potential inside the objective lens 10 and the angle α is the angle between the optical axis and an axis normal to the front surface of the particle mirror 14. By scanning the charged particle beam over the specimen and displaying/recording the output of the detector 16 an image of the surface of the specimen is formed.

35

A second embodiment according to the invention is shown schematically in Fig. 3. Components that are the same as in Fig. 1 have the same reference designators and are not described further. The embodiment shown in Fig. 3 differs from the embodiment shown in Fig. 1 in that an additional conductive screening grid 22, for screening potential of the conductive surface 21 from the rest of the device, is provided in front of the conductive surface 21. Furthermore, the embodiment according to the invention shown in Fig. 3 comprises a high pass filter 30 that is arranged in front of the detector 16, allowing only particles having an energy above a predetermined energy to enter the detector 16. The high pass filter 30 comprises a conductive filtering grid 31 and a further screening grid 32 arranged before the filtering grid 31. The combination of the low pass filter 14 (the particle mirror) and the high pass filter 30 allows to pick out any band of energies for the detection and thus enhance material contrast or other features of the specimen.

Fig. 4 is a enlarged view of the particle mirror 14 as used in Fig. 3. The particle mirror 14 as shown in Fig. 3 comprises a front surface 27, a back surface 28, a deflecting region 25 located on the front surface for deflecting all particles in a given velocity range (energy range) and in a given angular range, and a drift region 26 reaching from the back surface 28 to the front surface 27 for passing particles from the back surface 28 to the front surface 27 of the mirror.

Furthermore, particle mirror 14 comprises a conductive surface 21 kept on a predetermined potential sufficient to deflect all particles having less than a predetermined energy. The potential of surface 21 is screened by a conductive screening grid 22 located in front of the surface 21. Thereby, the distance between the conductive surface 21 and the screening grid 22 is preferably chosen larger than 10 times the mesh size of the grid 22. The screening grid 22 is preferably maintained on the same potential as those elements adjacent to the particle mirror 14 in the charged particle device. By using a screening grid 22 the potential of the conductive surface 21, which is usually considerably different from the potential of elements adjacent to the particle mirror 14, can

be hidden from these elements. Accordingly, negative side effects due to the potential of the conductive surface 21 can be avoided.

5 When a charged particle, like a secondary electron, having less than a predetermined energy hits the deflecting region 25 of the particle mirror 14, the particle is deflected in a manner, so that the angle β_o between the outgoing path 9B of the particle and the axes normal to the front surface of the mirror equals the angle β_i between the incoming path 9A of the particle and the axes normal to the front surface of the mirror.

10

Since the particle mirror 14 is made of a ceramic material, the ceramic material functions as a particle absorber 23 located between the back surface 28 of the mirror and the conductive surface 21 for absorbing particles, which have more than the predetermined energy and which are, therefore, able to pass through the surface 21.

15

As can be seen from Fig. 4, the drift region is not located at the geometrical center of the mirror, which is indicated with the reference number 40. The mirror shown in Fig. 4 has the shape of a circular disk having a middle point. Accordingly, the geometrical center of the mirror is the middle point of the disk. Due to the fact that the drift region is positioned away from the geometrical center of the mirror, the geometrical center of the mirror can be used as deflecting region, which increases the quality of the examination considerably.

25

A third embodiment according to the invention is shown schematically in Fig. 5. A charged particle beam 4, normally an electron beam, comes from charged particle source 2 e.g. a tungsten-hairpin gun, a lanthanum-hexaboride gun, a field-emission gun, or a thermionic Schottkey emitter. At least one anode 3 is arranged below the particle source 2, which attracts and accelerates the charged particles. In order to accelerate the charged particles, the charged particle source 2 is kept on negative potential, for example -0.5 kV, whereas the anode 3 is kept on a positive potential, for example +10 kV.

30

The anode 3 is followed by a condenser lens 5, which concentrates the charged particles into a fine beam and guides the beam along the optical axis 6', which is not the axis 6 of the objective lens 10. The beam 4 of charged particles then enters the first stage 12B of a two step deflection unit, which
5 directs the beam 4 of charged particles towards the optical axis 6 of the objective lens. On its way to the optical axis 6, the beam 4 passes the particle mirror 14, that is located on the optical axis 6 of the objective lens. The charged particle beam 4 passes the particle mirror 14 through a drift region 26 (drift tube) arranged in the particle mirror 14. Due to drift region 26 arranged
10 in the particle mirror 14, the charged particle beam 4 passes the particle mirror 14 in a basically undisturbed manner. Accordingly, there is no need for any additional measures for correcting the charged particle beam. The beam 4 of charged particles then enters the second stage 12C of the two step deflection unit 12, which redirects the beam 4 of charged particles in the direction the
15 optical axis 6.

The deflection unit 12C is followed by the objective lens 10 for focusing the particle beam 4 onto a specimen 8. In order to decelerate the charged particles, the specimen 8 is grounded, so that the charged particles, normally
20 electrons, hit the specimen 8 with an energy of 0.5 keV in this example.

Due to the high positive potential inside the objective lens 10 (in this example +10 kV), the secondary electrons 44, that escape from the specimen 8, are drawn into the objective lens 10 and are accelerated towards the particle
25 mirror 14. The secondary electrons 44 pass the deflection unit 12C and move on to the particle mirror 14. By passing the deflection unit 12C, the secondary electrons are also deflected. In the example shown in Fig. 5 the deflection unit 12C is a magnetic deflection unit. Therefore, the secondary electrons 44 are deflected in the opposite direction with regard to the primary electron beam 4.
30 Accordingly, the primary electron beam and the secondary electrons are separated without negatively affecting the primary electron beam 4.

The secondary electrons 44 hit the deflecting region 25 of the particle mirror 14 and are deflected toward the detector 16. In the embodiment of the
35 present invention shown in Fig. 5, the particle mirror 14 comprises a

By scanning the charged particle beam over the specimen and displaying/recording the output of the detector 16 and/or displaying/recording the output of the second detector 24 an image of the surface of the specimen is
5 formed.

γ

A fourth embodiment according to the invention is shown schematically in Fig. 6. A charged particle beam 4, normally an electron beam, comes from charged particle source 2 e.g. a tungsten-hairpin gun, a lanthanum-hexaboride
10 gun, a field-emission gun, or a thermionic Schottkey emitter. At least one anode 3 is arranged below the particle source 2, which attracts and accelerates the charged particles. In order to accelerate the charged particles, the charged particle source 2 is kept on negative potential, for example -0.5 kV, whereas the anode 3 is kept on a positive potential, for example +10 kV.

15

The anode 3 is followed by a condenser lens 5, which concentrates the charged particles into a fine beam and guides the beam along the optical axis 6. On its way along the optical axis 6, the beam 4 passes the particle mirror 14, that is located on the optical axis 6 of the objective lens 10. The charged
20 particle beam 4 passes the particle mirror 14 through a drift region 26 (drift tube) arranged in the center of the particle mirror 14. Due to drift region 26 arranged in the particle mirror 14, the charged particle beam 4 passes the particle mirror 14 in a basically undisturbed manner.

25 The particle mirror 14 is followed by the objective lens 10 for focusing the particle beam 4 onto a specimen 8. In order to decelerate the charged particles, the specimen 8 is grounded, so that the charged particles, normally electrons, hit the specimen 8 with an energy of 0.5 keV in this example.

30 Due to the high positive potential inside the objective lens 10 (in this example +10 kV), the secondary electrons, that escape from the specimen 8, are drawn into the objective lens 10 and are accelerated towards the particle mirror 14. The secondary electrons 44 hit the deflecting region 25 of the particle mirror 14 and are deflected toward the detector 16. In the embodiment of the
35 present invention shown in Fig. 6 the particle mirror 14 comprises a conductive

deflecting grid 41, which is tilted with regard to the optical axis 6 by an angle α of about 45 degree. Furthermore, the conductive deflecting grid 41 is kept on a predetermined potential sufficient to deflect all particles having less than a predetermined energy. In this example, the deflecting grid 41 is kept on a potential of slightly below +5 kV, in order to deflect all secondary electrons coming from the specimen 8 towards the detector 16. Thereby, the secondary electrons 44 are deflected in a manner, so that the angle β_o between the outgoing path of the particle and the axes normal to the front surface of the mirror equals the angle β_i between the incoming path of the particle and the axes normal to the front surface of the mirror.

On their way to the detector 16, the secondary electrons 44 pass a high pass filter 30 that is arranged in front of the detector 16, allowing only particles having an energy above a predetermined energy to enter the detector 16. The high pass filter 30 comprises a conductive filtering grid 31 and a further screening grid 32 arranged before the filtering grid 31. The combination of the low pass filter 14 (the particle mirror) and the high pass filter 30 allows to pick out any band of energies for the detection and thus enhance material contrast or other features of the specimen.

Due to the high positive potential inside the objective lens 10 (in this example +10 kV), the backscattered electrons 45 are also drawn into the objective lens 10 and are accelerated towards the particle mirror 14. Accordingly, the backscattered electrons 45 also hit the deflecting region 25 of the particle mirror 14. However, due to their relatively high energy compared to the secondary electrons, the potential of the conductive deflecting grid 41 is not sufficient to deflect the backscattered electrons. Accordingly, the backscattered electrons 45 pass through the conductive deflecting grid 41 and reach the particle absorber 23 that is arranged behind the conductive deflecting grid 41.

By scanning the charged particle beam over the specimen and displaying/recording the output of the detector 16 an image of the surface of the specimen is formed.

While the invention has been described with reference to various exemplary embodiments thereof, those of ordinary skill in the art would appreciate that various implementations and variations are possible without departing from the scope and spirit of the invention, as defined by the appended

5 claims. For example, it should be readily apparent that the particle mirror can be tilted at angles other than 45 degrees, depending on the particular construction of the particle column. Similarly, the various voltage values are provided as examples only, and other values may be used. Also, the filtering

10 schemes on the mirror and detector may be implemented to various degrees and combinations, and can be readily applied in any such combinations to any of the exemplary embodiments disclosed herein.

CLAIMS

- 5 1. A charged particle device (1) comprising:

a particle source (2) for providing a charged particle beam (4);

an objective lens (10) for focusing the particle beam onto a specimen (8),

10 said objective lens (10) having an optical axis (6);

a particle mirror (14) located on the optical axis (6) of the objective lens (10), said particle mirror (14) having a front surface (27), a back surface (28), a drift region (26) reaching from the back surface (28) to the front surface (27) for letting the charged particle beam (4) pass from the back surface (28) to the front surface (27), said drift region (26) being

15 positioned away from the optical axis (6), and a deflecting region (25) located on the front surface (27) for deflecting charged particles coming from the specimen (8) towards a detector (16).

20
2. The charged particle device (1) according to claim 1 wherein the particle mirror (14) comprises a deflecting region (25) located on the front surface (27) for deflecting all particles in a given velocity range and in a
- 25 given angular range, so that the angle β_o between the outgoing path of the particle and the axes normal to the front surface of the mirror, at the point where the particle hits the mirror, equals the angle β_i between the incoming path of the particle and the axes normal to the front surface of the mirror.
- 30
3. The charged particle device (1) according to claim 1 or 2 wherein the drift region (26) reaching from the back surface (28) to the front surface (27) is positioned away from the geometrical center (40) of the mirror.
- 35

4. The charged particle device (1) according to one of the preceding claims further comprising a deflection unit (12C) for directing the charged particle beam essentially along the optical axis of the objective lens, said deflection unit (12C) being arranged between the particle mirror (14) and the objective lens (10).
5. The charged particle device (1) according to claim 4 comprising a three step deflection unit (12) for deflecting the charged particle beam (4) away from the optical axis (6) and essentially back onto the optical axis (6) of the objective lens (10).
6. The charged particle device (1) according to one of the preceding claim wherein the particle mirror (14) is tilted with regard to the optical axis (6) by an angel α between about 20 and about 70 degree, preferably between about 40 and about 50 degree, most preferably about 45 degree.
7. The charged particle device (1) according to one of the preceding claims wherein the particle mirror (14) comprises a conductive surface (21) or a conductive deflecting grid (41) kept on a predetermined potential sufficient to deflect all particles having less than a predetermined energy.
8. The charged particle device (1) according to claim 7 wherein the particle mirror (14) comprises at least one conductive screening grid (22) for screening potential of the conductive surface (21) or the conductive deflecting grid (41) from the rest of the device.
9. The charged particle device (1) according to claim 7 or 8 wherein the particle mirror (14) comprises a particle absorber (23) for absorbing particles having more than the predetermined energy.

10. The charged particle device (1) according to claim 7 or 8 wherein a
5 second detector (24) is arranged behind the conductive deflecting grid
(41) for detecting particles having more than the predetermined energy.
11. The charged particle device (1) according to one of the preceding claims
10 wherein a high pass filter (30) is arranged in front of the detector (16),
allowing only particles having an energy above a predetermined energy
to enter the detector (16).
12. The charged particle device (1) according to claim 11 wherein the high
15 pass filter (30) comprises a conductive filtering grid (31) kept on a
predetermined potential sufficient to filter out all particles having less
than a predetermined energy.
- 20 13. The charged particle device (1) according to one of the preceding claims
wherein said drift region (26) is positioned away from the optical axis (6)
of the objective lens (10), so that all charged particle coming from the
specimen within an angle $\gamma \leq 5$ degree, preferably ≤ 10 degree, as
25 measured from the optical axis (6) of the objective lens (10), hit the
deflecting region (25) of the mirror (14).
14. A particle mirror (14) for use in a charged particle device comprising:
30 a front surface (27) and a back surface (28),

a deflecting region (25) located on the front surface (27) for deflecting all
particles in a given velocity range and in a given angular range,

a drift region (26) reaching from the back surface (28) to the front surface (27) for letting particles pass from the back surface (28) to the front surface (27) of the mirror, the drift region (26) being positioned away from the geometrical center (40) of the mirror.

5

15. The particle mirror (14) according to claim 14 wherein the particle mirror (14) further comprises a conductive surface (21) or a conductive deflecting grid (41) kept on a predetermined potential sufficient to deflect all particles having less than a predetermined energy.

10

16. The particle mirror (14) according to claim 15 wherein the particle mirror (14) further comprises at least one conductive screening grid (22) for screening potential of the conductive surface (21) or the conductive deflecting grid (41).

15

17. The particle mirror (14) according to claim 15 or 16 wherein the particle mirror (14) further comprises a particle absorber (23) for absorbing particles having more than the predetermined energy.

20

18. The particle mirror (14) according to one of claims 14 to 17 wherein deflecting region (25) deflects the particles, so that the angle between the outgoing path of the particle and the axes normal to the front surface of the mirror, at the point where the particle hits the mirror, equals the angle between the incoming path of the particle and the axes normal to the front surface of the mirror,

25

30

19. A method for the examination of specimen with a beam of charged particles comprising the steps of:

35 providing a charged particle beam;

letting the charged particle beam pass through a drift region reaching from the back surface to the front surface of a particle mirror

5 focusing the particle beam onto a specimen with an objective lens, said objective lens having an optical axis; and

deflecting charged particles coming from the specimen towards a detector with a deflecting region of the particle mirror;

10

wherein said drift region is positioned away from the optical axis.

20. A charged particle (1) device comprising:

15

a particle source (2) for providing a charged particle beam (4);

an objective lens (10) for focusing the particle beam (4) onto a specimen (8);

20

a particle mirror (14) for deflecting charged particles coming from the specimen towards a detector (16); and

25 a high pass filter (30) being arranged in front of the detector (16), allowing only particles having an energy above a predetermined energy to enter the detector (16).

30 21. The charged particle device (1) according to claim 20 wherein the particle mirror (14) comprises a conductive surface (21) or the conductive deflecting grid (41) kept on a predetermined potential sufficient to deflect all particles having less than a predetermined energy.

- 5
22. The charged particle device (1) according to claim 21 wherein the particle mirror (14) comprises at least one conductive screening grid (22) for screening potential of the conductive surface (21) or the conductive deflecting grid (41) from the rest of the device.
- 10
23. The charged particle device (1) according to claim 21 or 22 wherein the particle mirror (14) comprises a particle absorber (23) for absorbing particles having more than the predetermined energy.
- 15
24. The charged particle device (1) according to one of claims 20 to 23 wherein the particle mirror (14) comprises a deflecting region (25) located on the front surface (27) for deflecting all particles in a given velocity range and in a given angular range, so that the angle β_o between the outgoing path of the particle and the axes normal to the front surface of the mirror, at the point where the particle hits the mirror, equals the angle β_i between the incoming path of the particle and the axes normal to the front surface of the mirror.
- 20
25. The charged particle device (1) according to one of claims 20 to 24 wherein the particle mirror (14) is tilted with regard to the optical axis (6) by an angel α between about 20 and about 70 degree, preferably between about 40 and about 50 degree, most preferably about 45 degree.
- 25

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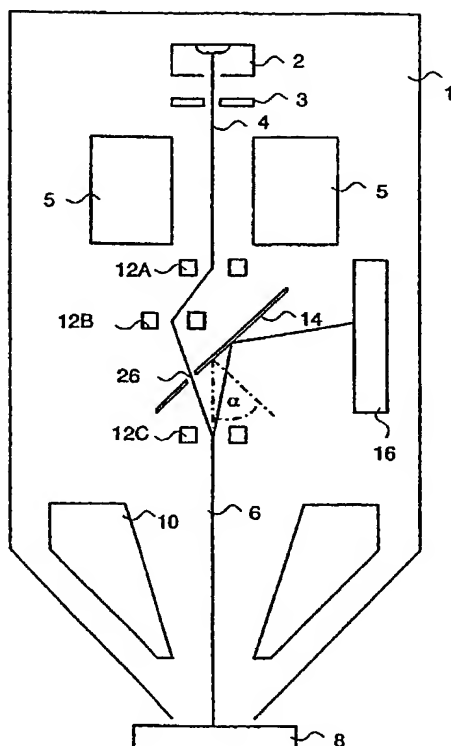
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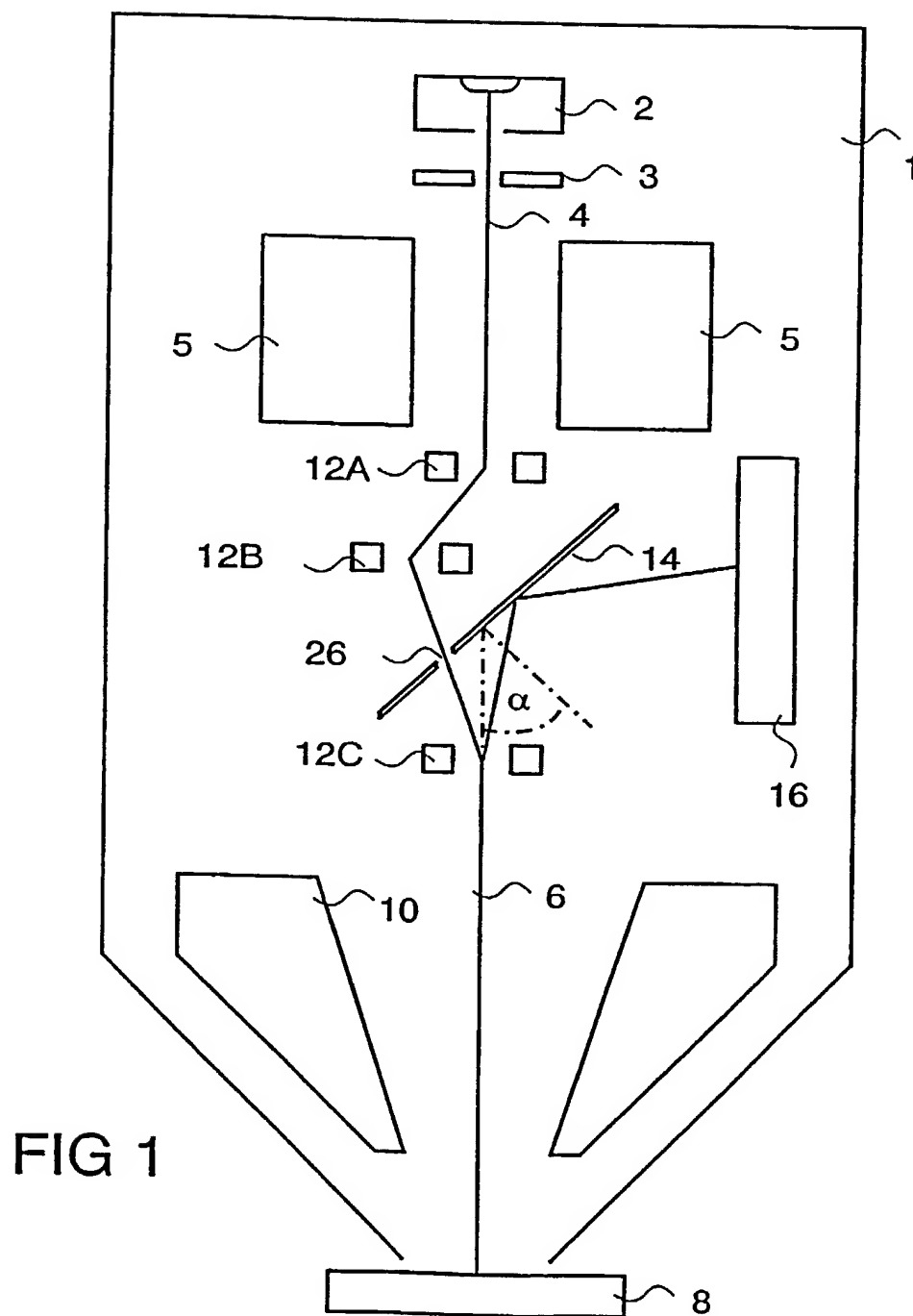
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(54) Title: **CHARGED PARTICLE DEVICE**



(57) Abstract: The invention provides a charged particle device (1) comprising: a particle source (2) for providing a charged particle beam (4), an objective lens (10) for directing the particle beam onto a specimen (8), said objective lens (10) having an optical axis (6); a particle mirror (14) located on the optical axis (6) of the objective lens (10), said particle mirror having a front surface, a back surface, a drift region (26) reaching from the back surface to the front surface for letting the charged particle beam pass from the back surface to the front surface, said drift region (26) being positioned away from the optical axis (6), and a deflecting region located on the front surface for deflecting charge particles coming from the specimen towards a detector (16).

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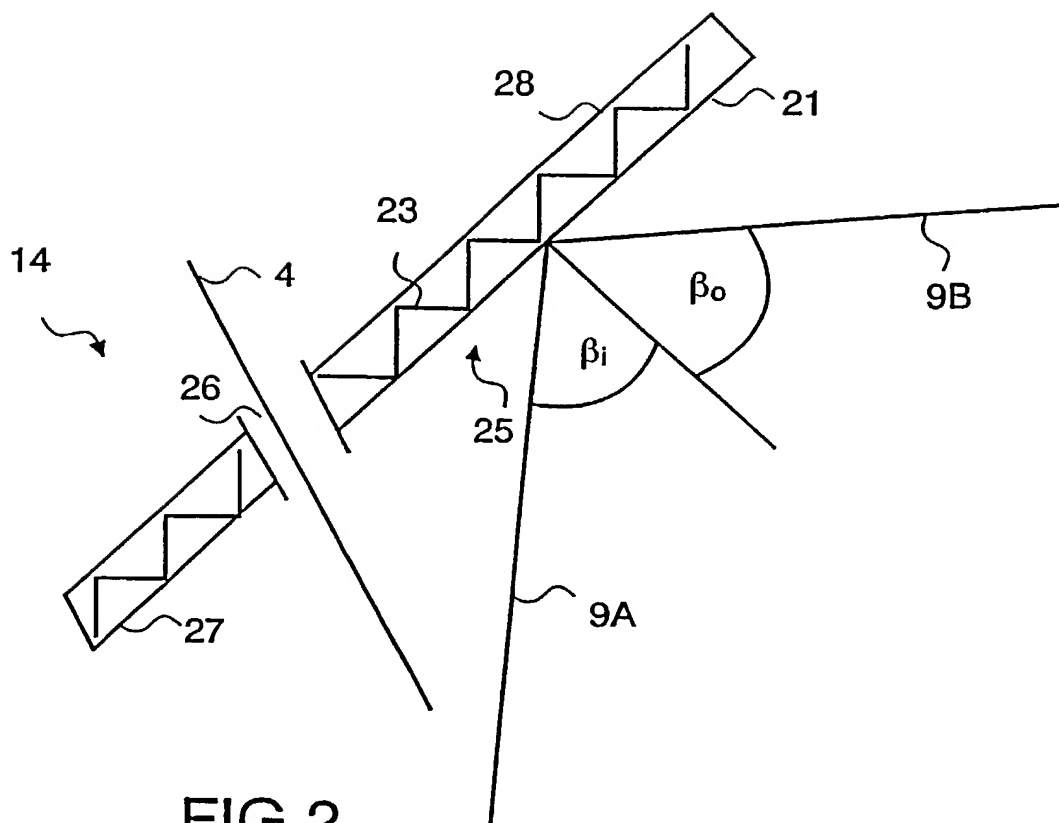
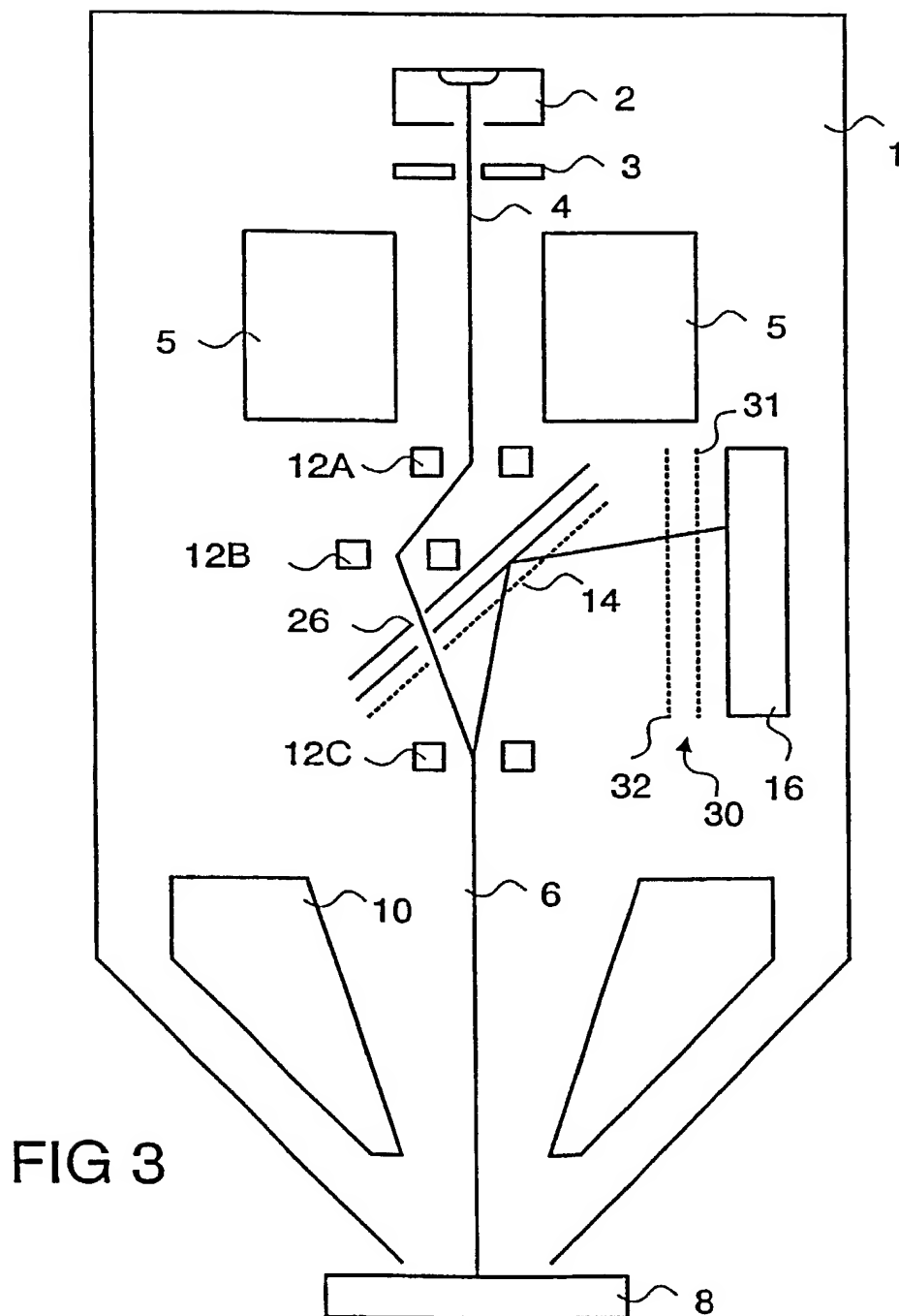


FIG 2



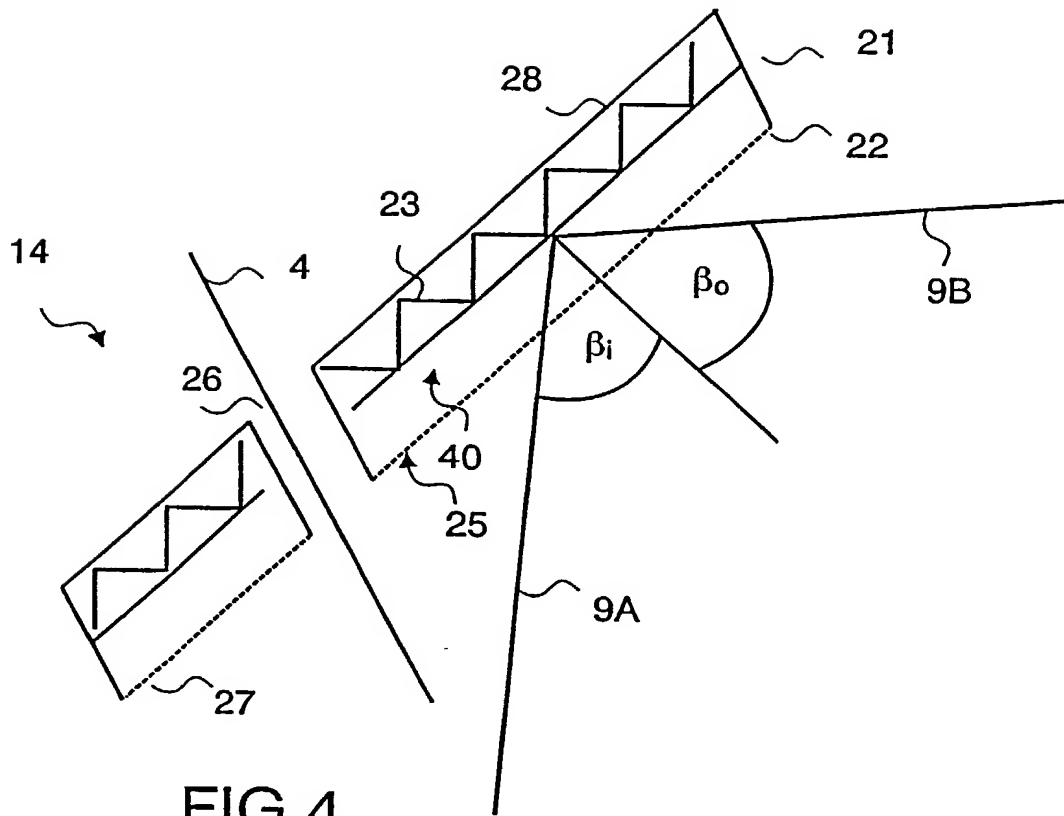
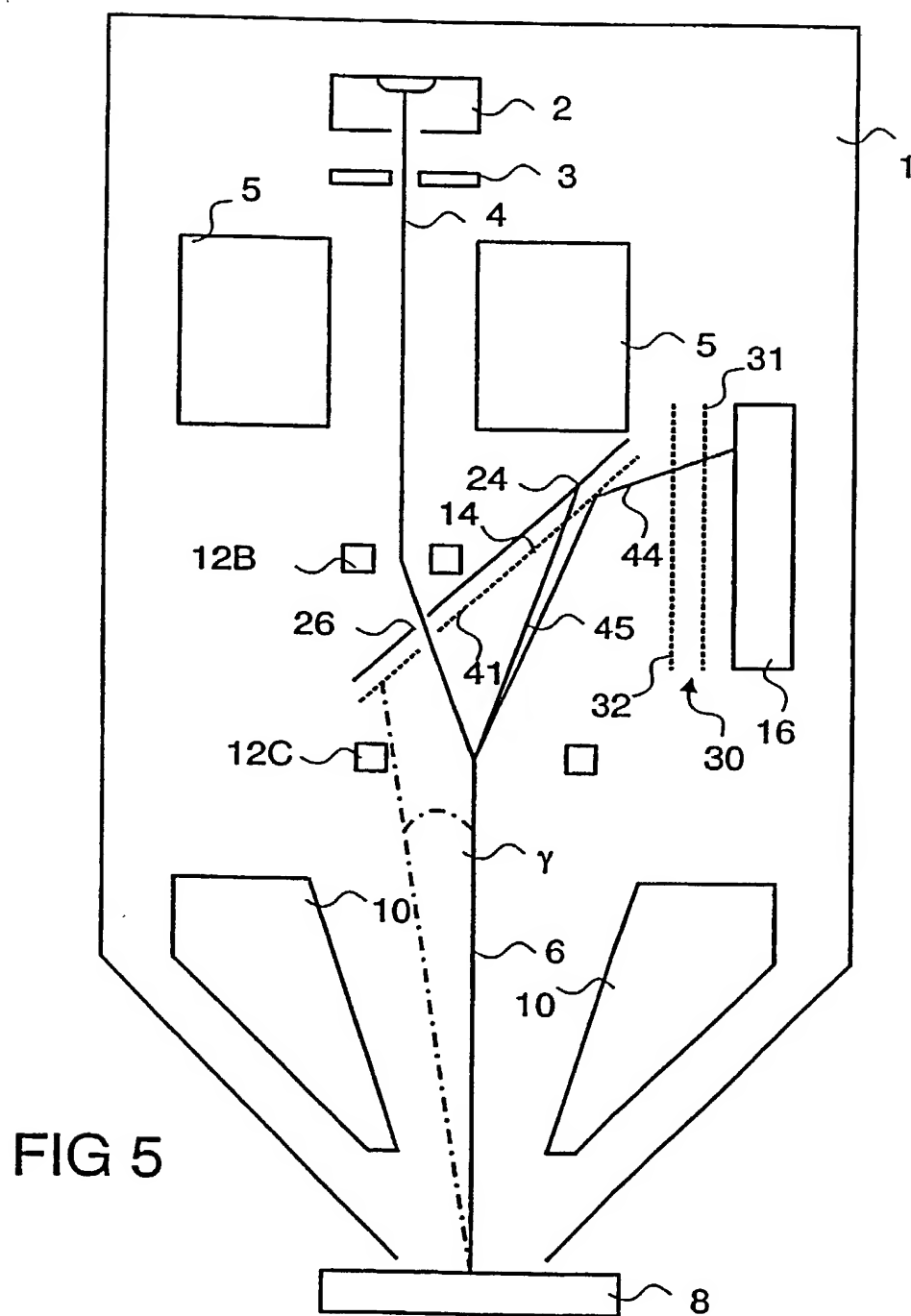
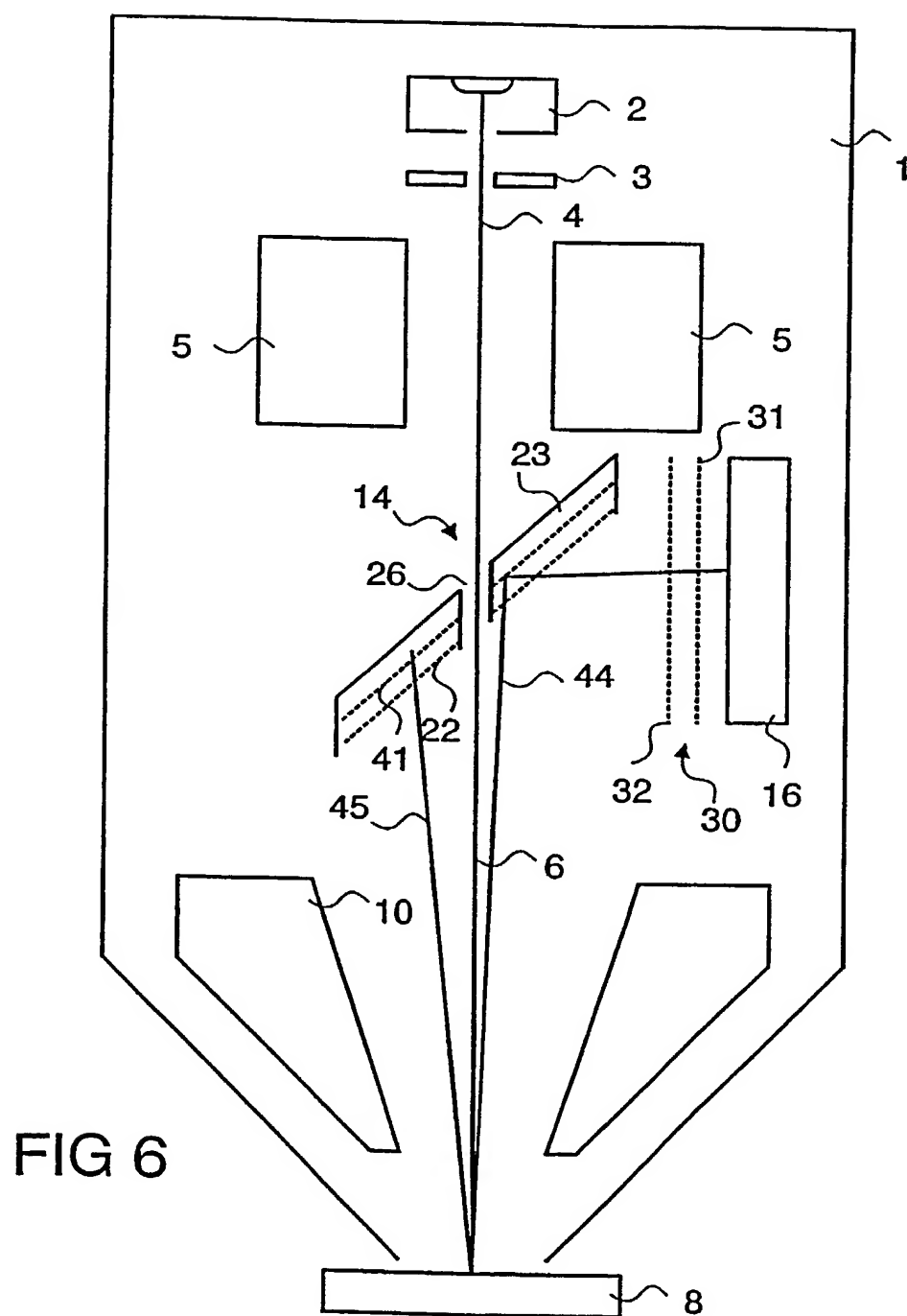


FIG 4





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DECLARATION AND POWER OF ATTORNEY FOR UTILITY OR DESIGN PATENT APPLICATION (37 CFR 1.63)

As a below named inventor, I hereby declare that: My residence, mailing address, and citizenship are as stated below next to my name. I believe I am the original, first and sole inventor (if only one name is listed below) or an original, first and joint inventor (if plural names are listed below) of the subject matter which is claimed and for which a patent is sought on the invention entitled:

CHARGED PARTICLE DEVICE

The application of which

☐ is attached hereto

OR

☒ was filed on December 21, 2001 as United States Application Number or PCT International Application Number 10/031,001 (Confirmation No. 3856), and was amended on _____ (if applicable).

I hereby state that I have reviewed and understand the contents of the above identified application, including the claims, as amended by any amendment specifically referred to above.

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I hereby claim foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. 119(a)-(d) or (f), or 365(b) of any foreign application(s) for patent, inventor's or plant breeder's rights certificate(s), or 365(a) of any PCT international application(s) which designated at least one country other than the United States of America, listed below and have also identified below, by checking the box, any foreign application(s) for patent, inventor's or plant breeder's rights certificate(s), or any PCT international application(s) having a filing date before that of the application on which priority is claimed.

Prior Application Number(s)	Country	Filing Date	Priority Claimed	
			Yes	No
EP 99112116.1-2208	EP	June 23, 1999	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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Prior U.S. or International Application Number(s)	U.S. or International Filing Date	Status
PCT/EP00/05800	6/23/2000	

I hereby appoint all attorneys of **SUGHRUE MION, PLLC** who are listed under the USPTO Customer Number shown below as my attorneys to prosecute this application and to transact all business in the United States Patent and Trademark Office connected therewith, recognizing that the specific attorneys listed under that Customer Number may be changed from time to time at the sole discretion of Sughrue Mion, PLLC, and request that all correspondence about the application be addressed to the address filed under the same USPTO Customer Number.



23493

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